

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PEKING 2847

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, CH, RO, YO, IR
SUBJ: HUA'S JOURNEY TO THE WEST: THE VIEW FROM PEKING

1. SUMMARY. CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG'S TWO-WEEK VISIT TO ROMANIA,
YUGOSLAVIA AND IRAN WAS NOT ONLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH BUT
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ALSO A CONVINCING DEMONSTRATION THAT CHINA HAS EMERGED
FULLY FROM THE SELF-ISOLATION IMPOSED DURING THE CULTURAL
REVOLUTION. THE TRIP ALSO WAS EVIDENCE OF THE PRC'S DETER-
MINATION TO COMPETE WITH SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREAS FAR
FROM CHINA AND ITS GROWING SOPHISTICATION IN CARRYING OUT
THIS COMPETITION. THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT SEEMS TO GUARANTEE
THAT PRC LEADERS WILL TURN MORE AND MORE TO PERSONAL DIPLOMACY

TO ATTAIN CHINA'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES. END SUMMARY.

2. CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG RETURNED SEPTEMBER 5 FROM AN UNPRECEDENTED JOURNEY TO ROMANIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND IRAN. THE VISIT DRAMATIZED CHINA'S INTEREST IN OPPOSING SOVIET INFLUENCE EVEN IN AREAS FAR REMOVED FROM CHINA'S BORDERS. IT SERVED TO BURNISH HUA'S OWN PUBLIC IMAGE, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD WARN AGAINST ANY HASTY CONCLUSION AS TO HIS REAL ROLE IN CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY DON-MAKING PROCESS. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE VISIT DEMONSTRATED PEKING'S DESIRE TO SEEK NEW WAYS TO BREAK OUT OF ITS PREVIOUS SELF-IMPOSED ISOLATION AND TO BUILD UP THE PRC'S PRESTIGE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

3. CHAIRMAN HUA'S ODYSSEY WAS OF COURSE GIVEN DAILY FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN THE PRC NEWSPAPERS, AND HIS ACTIVITIES WERE CHRONICLED EVERY EVENING IN THE TELEVISION NEWS. BEYOND THE BOOST PROVIDED TO HUA'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE, THIS CONSTANT EXPOSURE ALSO SERVED TO BRING HOME TO MILLIONS OF CHINESE THE RELATIVELY AFFLUENT CONDITIONS IN SUCH DEVELOPED SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AS ROMANIA AND YUGOSLAVIA. THE EFFECT OF THIS GLIMPSE OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN, SHOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE CHINESE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO MODERNIZE THEIR COUNTRY.

4. THE VISIT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED WITH AT LEAST THREE OBJECTIVES IN MIND:
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-- BY SHOWING THE FLAG, TO BUILD UP GREATER PRESTIGE FOR THE PRC AND ITS CHAIRMAN;
-- TO DEMONSTRATE THAT PEKING STILL MAINTAINS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SOME SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, AT A TIME WHEN ITS TIES WITH SUCH FORMERLY CLOSE ALLIES AS VIETNAM AND ALBANIA HAVE BECOME UNRAVELED; AND
-- TO CONTAIN SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE REGION, BY BUILDING UP PEKING'S OWN RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNTRIES IN WESTERN ASIA AND THE BALKANS AND, HOPEFULLY, BY ENCOURAGING OTHER SOVIET WARSAW PACT ALLIES TO SEEK ROMANIAN-STYLE GREATER INDEPENDENCE FROM MOSCOW.

5. IT APPEARS THAT THE VISIT HAS ACCOMPLISHED MOST OF THESE OBJECTIVES. HUA'S TRIP HAS THRUST CHINA ONTO THE WORLD STAGE AND HAS FORCED OTHER COUNTRIES TO SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE. THE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH ROMANIA AND YUGOSLAVIA AND THE SOLIDIFYING OF THESE FRATERNAL RELATIONS WILL PRESUMABLY DO MUCH TO RESSURE THE PRC'S IDEOLOGICAL FRIENDS (AND MANY CHINESE CITIZENS AS WELL) THAT PEKING'S OPENING TO THE WEST HAS NOT ISOLATED IT FROM OTHER SOCIALIST NATIDESPITE PROFESSIONS BY HUA'S HOSTS THAT THE VISIT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT, HUA'S

STOPS IN ROMANIA AND YUGOSLAVIA WERE WIDELY VIEWED AS ANTI-SOVIET IN DESIGN, AND THE MOSCOW PRESS REACTION HAS SERVED TO CONFIRM THIS IMPRESSION. SIMILARLY, ALTHOUGH DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN TEHERAN ARE SO FAR LACKING, IT SEEMS CERTAIN THAT THE CHINESE USED THEIR STOP IN IRAN TO SEEK WAYS OF EXPANDING PEKING'S INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA AT THE EXPENSE OF MOSCOW.

6. IF A PRC GOAL WAS TO ENCOURAGE THE LOOSENING OF WARSAW PACT TIES, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT HUA MET WITH ANY SUCCESS ON THIS FRONT. INDEED, THE SOVIET REACTION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO DISCOURAGE ANY OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY FROM EMULATING THE MAVERICK ROMANIANS.

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7. IT IS WORTHWHILE NOTING THE DEGREE OF SOPHISTICATION WITH WHICH HUA AND HIS ADVISERS HANDLED THIS QUESTION. NOWHERE DID HE ENGAGE IN A DIRECT PUBLIC ATTACK ON THE SOVIET UNION, IN CONTRAST TO THE USUAL PRACTICE AT PEKING BANQUETS. ATTACKS ON "HEGEMONISM" SERVED TO IDENTIFY THE TARGET WITHOUT EMBARRASSING THE HOST GOVERNMENTS. HUA ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE SOFT-PEDALLED THE THEME OF INEVITABILITY OF WAR IN ORDER TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF HIS HOSTS' VIEWS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PEKING 2847

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR PARA TEN

8. HUA'S TRIP HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A NEW OPENING OF CHINA TO THE WORLD. THIS IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY TRUE. THE PRC CARRIED ON AN ACTIVE DIPLOMACY IN THE MID-1950'S AND THE EARLY 1960'S, WHEN MUCH OF THE DIPLOMATIC BURDEN WAS CARRIED BY CONFIDENTIAL

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CHOU EN-LAI. BUT PARTICIPATION BY THE PARTY CHAIRMAN IN THIS TYPE OF DIPLOMACY IS UNPRECEDENTED, AND SEEMS TO SYMBOLIZE AN ENTIRELY NEW APPROACH TO THE WORLD BY PEKING'S LEADERSHIP.

9. CHINA'S LEADERS APPEAR TO HAVE DECIDED THAT IF THEY ARE SERIOUS ABOUT CONTAINING SOVIET INFLUENCE (AND THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THEY ARE), THEY MUST DO MORE THAN ISSUE WEIGHTY PRONOUNCEMENTS FROM PEKING AND INVITE WORLD LEADERS TO COME TO CHINA TO PAY THEIR RESPECTS. IT IS NECESSARY THAT THEY TAKE THEIR MESSAGE PERSONALLY TO THE WORLD'S CAPITALS. THEY MAY ALSO, IN LIGHT OF THE EXPERIENCE ON THIS TRIP, CONCLUDE THAT THE EFFECT ON WORLD OPINION WHEN A CHINESE LEADER VISITS ABROAD IS MUCH GREATER THAN DURING AN EQUIVALENT STATE VISIT TO PEKING.

10. THERE IS EVERY INDICATION THAT THE PACE OF PERSONAL DIPLOMACY WILL CONTINUE TO PICK UP. TENG HSIAO-PING HAS SCHEDULED VISITS TO NORTH KOREA, JAPAN, THAILAND AND PERHAPS MALAYSIA IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, WHILE HUA HIMSELF IS REPORTEDLY PLANNING A VISIT TO SEVERAL WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS NEXT YEAR. THUS, ALTHOUGH THE GOALS OF PEKING'S DIPLOMACY -- ABOVE ALL, THE CONTAINMENT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE AROUND THE WORLD -- REMAIN THE SAME, THE PRC LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO HAVE DECIDED THAT SUCCESSFUL PURSUIT OF THEIR

DIPLOMATIC OBJECTIVES REQUIRES A NEW EMPHASIS ON GLOBE-
TROTTER SUMMITRY. WOODCOCK

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